

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 03114 01 OF 02 150558Z
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-12 SOE-02 AF-10 ARA-10 CIAE-00
DODE-00 EA-10 EUR-12 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NASA-01 NEA-11 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OIC-02 SP-02 PA-01
DOE-15 CEQ-01 OES-07 SS-15 ICA-11 DLOS-09 /170 W
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R 150458Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5738
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CINCPAC HONOLULU
AMCONSUL AUCKLAND BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 WELLINGTON 03114

CINCPAC FOR POLAD AND ICA ADVISER

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM, MARR, MNUC, NZ
SUBJECT: UN SSOD: NO CHANGE IN GNZ POSITION ON SOUTH
- PACIFIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE ZONE (SPNWFZ)

1. IN HIS JUNE 6 SPEECH TO THE UN SPECIAL SESSION ON
DISARMAMENT, NZ FOREIGN MINISTER BRIAN TALBOYS MADE THE
FOLLOWING COMMENT REGARDING AN SPNWFZ:

"MANY NON-NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES ARE ACTIVELY CONSIDERING
THE QUESTION OF ESTABLISHING NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONES
(NWFZ) AS A MEANS OF CURBING NOT ONLY HORIZONTAL BUT
VERTICAL PROLIFERATION. NEW ZEALAND SUPPORTS THE PRIN-
CIPLE OF NWFZ, AND DEMONSTRATED THIS BELIEF BY VOTING
FOR RESOLUTION 31/70 IN 1976. AT THE SAME TIME, WE
ACCEPT THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE CCD EXPERT GROUP THAT
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PAGE 02 WELLIN 03114 01 OF 02 150558Z

NWFZ'S MUST BE CAPABLE OF ADEQUATE VERIFICATION, COM-
PATIBILITY WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW, AND SHOULD NOT DISTURB
EXISTING SECURITY RELATIONSHIPS. IT IS WITH THESE
CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND THAT MY GOVERNMENT APPROACHES
THE QUESTION OF A ZONE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC REGION.
WE HAVE AGREED TO ADVANCE THE CONCEPT OF A ZONE IN A
MANNER COMPATIBLE WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF FREEDOM OF THE

HIGH SEAS AND WITH EXISTING SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS."

2. INITIAL PRESS REPORTS OF THE TALBOYS SPEECH INDICATED THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME CHANGE IN THE GNZ POSITION ON THE SPNWFZ PROPOSAL, BUT SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH MFA OFFICERS CONFIRM THAT TALBOYS HAS MERELY RESTATED THE NATIONAL PARTY GOVERNMENT'S LONG-STANDING POLICY.

3. IN CLARIFICATION, MFA HAS CALLED OUR ATTENTION TO UNPUBLICIZED COMMENTS BY TALBOYS TO A SEMINAR ON DISARMAMENT ON APRIL 29. TALBOYS SAID:

"THE (NZ NATIONAL) CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ON DISARMAMENT) RECOMMENDS THAT THE GOVERNMENT ACT IMMEDIATELY TO ESTABLISH A NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC INCLUDING THE HIGH SEAS. IT RECOMMENDS ALSO THAT WE MOVE TO ESTABLISH A ZONE TO 'COVER INITIALLY THE LAND AREAS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC' MOVING LATER TO TERRITORIAL WATERS AND THE HIGH SEAS.

"NOW, I DO UNDERSTAND WHY SOME PEOPLE FAVOUR A NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE. IT IS SOMETHING THEY FEEL NEW ZEALAND CAN DO AT FIRST HAND TO HALT THE SPREAD OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. BUT THE SAME PRINCIPLES THAT I HAVE OUTLINED AS APPLICABLE TO BROAD DISARMAMENT ISSUES MUST GUIDE THE GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO THE ZONE QUESTION. THAT IS TO SAY, WE AIM FOR A SOUND AND PRAGMATIC BLEND
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PAGE 03 WELLIN 03114 01 OF 02 150558Z

OF DEFENCE AND DISARMAMENT CONSIDERATIONS TO MAXIMISE OUR SECURITY AND THE SECURITY OF FRIENDS. IDEALS TEMPERED WITH COMMONSENSE.

"THIS GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE OF NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONES. WE DEMONSTRATED THIS IN 1976 BY VOTING FOR A UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION WHICH EXPRESSED THE CONVICTION THAT ZONES OF THIS KIND CAN CONTRIBUTE TO NATIONAL SECURITY, AND TO THE GOAL OF COMPLETE AND GENERAL DISARMAMENT. LET ME ALSO RECALL THE GENEVA EXPERT GROUP'S STUDY WHICH THAT SAME RESOLUTION ENDORSED. THE EXPERT GROUP LAID DOWN SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES, OR GUIDELINES, FOR PROCEEDING WITH A ZONE. THEY ARE AS USEFUL A SET OF GUIDELINES ON THE SUBJECT AS ANY YET DEVELOPED. THERE ARE ABOUT 14 IN ALL AND I CANNOT HERE ENUMERATE EACH ONE. THE FIRST IS THAT THE INITIATIVE MUST COME FROM WITHIN THE REGION. SECONDLY THAT ALL STATES WITHIN THE REGION SHOULD SUPPORT THE ZONE. THIRDLY, THAT IT MUST -- LIKE ALL ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS -- BE ADEQUATELY VERIFIABLE. THERE ARE OTHERS.

"BUT THESE ALONE ARE SUFFICIENT TO INDICATE FIRST THE

COMPLEXITIES OF THE SECURITY ISSUES SURROUNDING A ZONE,
AND SECONDLY, THE HAZARDS THAT LIE IN THE PATH OF
CREATING A ZONE. HOW, FOR INSTANCE, DO YOU POLICE AN
OCEAN FOR SUBMARINES? HOW, FOR THAT MATTER, CAN ONE
SMALL PARTNER PROCEED AGAINST THE RESERVATIONS OF ITS
LARGER ALLIES ABOUT THE SECURITY IMPLICATIONS OF A ZONE.

"AT THE SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM IN 1976, WE FOUND COMMON
GROUND AMONG ALL THE STATES OF THE REGION. WE AGREED
TO ADVANCE THE CONCEPT OF A ZONE BUT IN DOING SO, WE
COMMITTED OURSELVES TO HAVE REGARD FOR TRADITIONAL

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 03114 02 OF 02 150548Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 WELLINGTON 03114

PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION OF THE HIGH SEAS,
AND FOR EXISTING SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS. THIS IS THE
PRESENT SITUATION, AND IT IS IN LINE WITH THE PRE-
VAILING VIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY."

4. THOUGH TALBOYS THUS INTENDED ONLY TO RESTATE
THE GNZ'S POSITION ON THE ZONE PROPOSAL, THE WAY HE
PHRASED IT HAS CAUSED CONFUSION AND THE OPPOSITION
ALREADY HAS FOLLOWED UP WITH A MOTION IN PARLIAMENT
URGING THAT THE GOVERNMENT MAKE A DETAILED COMMITMENT
TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN SPNWFZ. HEALY

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